

LUTE SOCIETY OF AMERICA QUARTERLY



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LUTE SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC. QUARTERLY

Volume 54, No. 1

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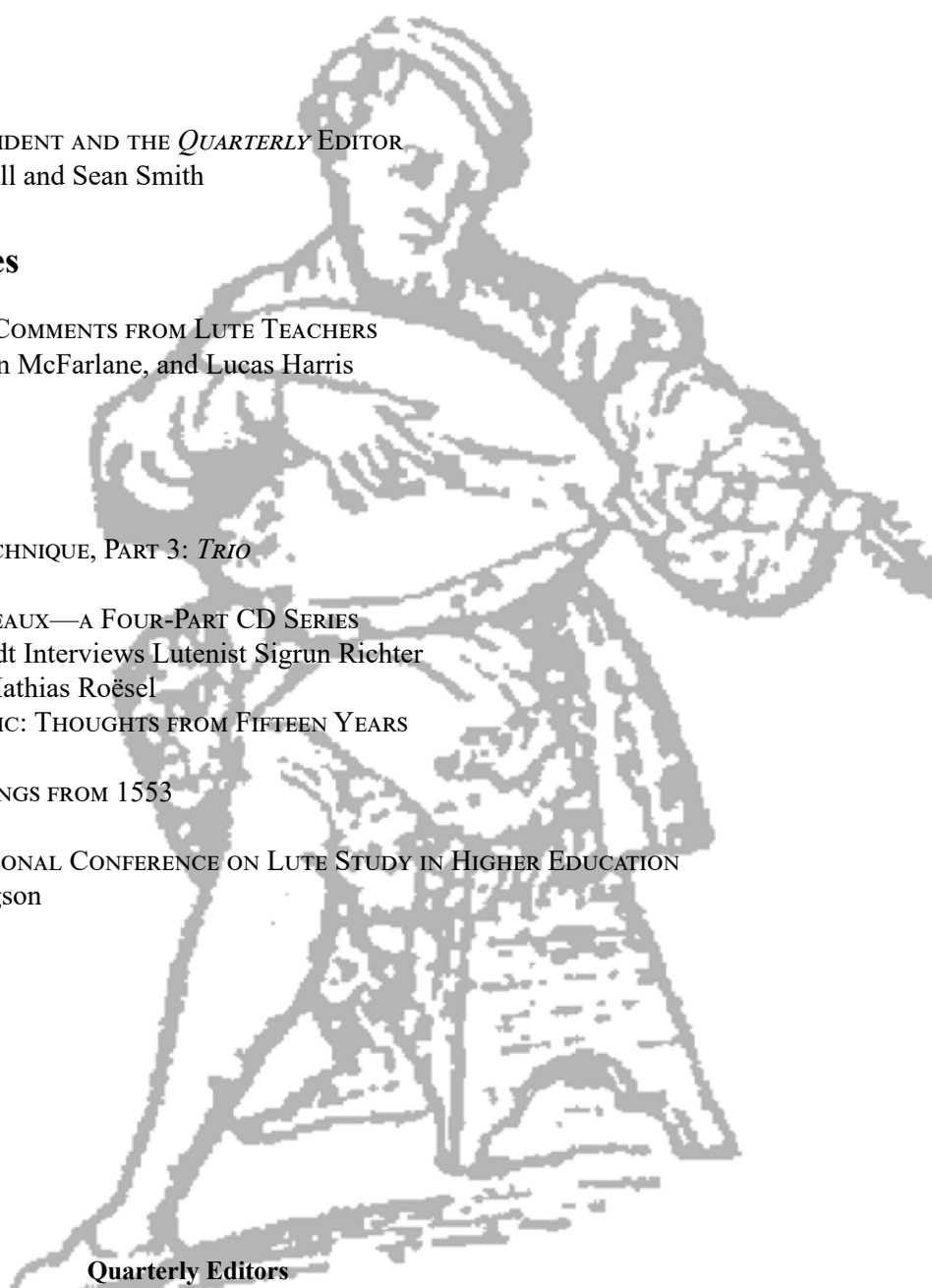
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Sigrun Richter



Messages from the LSA President & Quarterly Editor

From the President:

Greetings All!

While you have been busy playing your lutes, baroque guitars, theorboes, orpharions, and all manner of other medieval, renaissance, and baroque plucked instruments, your Board of Directors and Staff have been hard at work. "Doing what?" you might ask. Well....

LSA Treasurer

Goodbye, **Susan Meredith**! Hello **Melanie Nester**! We bade adieu to our Treasurer Susan Meredith too soon after she started! You never know when the job of your dreams will land in your lap and cause you to have to off-load all the little jobs that were keeping you going. But that's what happened. Susan served us very well in the short time she held the position, and we wish her all the best in her new job. After offering the job to our members and getting only one interested person who later had to back out, we decided to enlist the power of Indeed.com. That search brought us Melanie Nester of Cheyenne, Wyoming. There is more about her in this issue. Welcome, Melanie!

The Facsimile Collection

A big "Thank YOU!" to **Gary Boye**, who among other talents is Librarian at Appalachian State University in Boone, NC. He has answered the call to help with restoring broken links in our Digital Facsimile Collection. His plucked instrument and deep musicological background make him the ideal person for this job and we are grateful he is willing to help in this way. If you encounter a link that does not work, please let **Nancy Carlin** know. She will forward the information onward.

Renting Lutes in Canada

We have made significant progress in getting our Lute Rental Program to operate in Canada! Thanks to the efforts and clear thinking of **James Louder**, retired organ builder and lute lover in Montreal, we are so close to actually having lutes to rent there. He will be making a trip to visit family in Indiana, and as luck would have it, we have a community of Shipper/Care-takers there with just the instruments we need. James is seeing to the customs process and will pick up the instruments. He will also serve as the Shipper/Care-taker Manager for them. Thanks go also to **Wilma van Berkel** and **Travis Carey** for agreeing to be Shipper/Care-takers. Once this is all in place we will put out the word to our members in Canada. Of course, most of them already have lutes, but we hope they'll help spread the word when the time comes. These rentals will run through our website the same as rentals on this side of the border. The next step will be to learn what we need to do to accept donations from Canadians of instruments that will stay in Canada.

The Lute in Higher Education

At the end of September, yours truly spent a few days

in Bremen, Germany to attend (and give some opening words) at the first International Conference on the Lute in Higher Education. What a great gathering of more than seventy performers, teachers, and students! Among the attendees were the presidents of three lute societies, German, Dutch, and American. I couldn't keep my head from spinning around the question, "Is there a way, or are there ways, we can work together on some project? Is each society too much in its own silo?" I don't have an answer, but the question seems a good one. Maybe just putting it out there at this time will attract some ideas. For now, though, plans are afoot for the German and American Lute Societies to collaborate on publishing the papers that were read at this conference.

Volunteers Wanted

Are you looking for a way to feel more like you belong to the LSA? There's nothing like helping out to enhance your feeling of belonging. Perhaps will suit you.

The Lute Rental Program needs a Shipper/Caretaker Manager Could that person be YOU?

The Lute Rental Program has been redesigned as of this past March. Rather than have one person do everything, including housing fifty-six lutes(!), we have split the job three ways. We now have an Administrator, **Fiona Thistle**. And we have a group of about eight people, each of who takes care of from three-eight instruments. They also ship instruments out and receive them back. These are our Shipper/Caretakers.

What we need is someone to be a liaison between the Administrator and the Shipper/Caretakers, a MANAGER. This person will keep track of what instruments are where when not rented. He or she will oversee our UPS account and generate shipping labels. This person will work closely with the LRP Administrator to resolve any issues that might come up and see to it that the program runs smoothly.

This person should have adequate computer skills to operate our UPS account, and use the LSA website, use the master spreadsheet Fiona has created for keeping track of what instrument is where.

This person should have a helpful, encouraging attitude, and be fairly well organized.

If you would like to consider this position, let me or **Joe Harris** know (contact information in the masthead—page 31). Either of us can send a list of specific tasks and answer any questions you might have.

You can also sign up to be a Shipper/Caretaker... We have "housing" for about 38 of our 56 lutes, so if you'd like to take care of any number of the remaining 14 or so lutes, you choose how many, let me or Joe Harris know. (This number does not include the 3 or 4 that are going to Canada.)

Cathy Liddell

From the *Quarterly* Assistant Editor:

We can't say it enough: There's so much music for lute that we need more lutenists to get it played! As editors, Nancy and I see so many possibilities for performing this music. Yes, there is the "I'll just play at my music stand by myself" route, but as soon as we see our chops building we understand that half of the learning-to-play contract involves someone to listen. We need to get those ears in front of us. So how do we do that?

I'm especially happy to include the article by **Deb Fox** showing how her group has spread their name around their town and invited others in for the party. There's no reason why like-minded people can't start a movement to Hoover up the curious and strategically place themselves around for the public to see. She shares her hard-won insights and lists what has worked. The "start small and have a complete plan" is often overlooked as we improve our musical skills but it gets results. National movements like Early Music America and networking seem hazy as we work up our scales, but when they help put audiences in front of us we understand that this is why we do it.

Skills? Why not learn how to strum? **Pablo Zapico** focuses on baroque guitar, but a quick perusal of Dalza and other dance works shows that a passionate player will garner more interest than a plucker counting 1, 2, 3, over and over again. Enliven (dare I say, electrify?) your pivas and galliards! Imagine that dancer who sees that his player is as engaged as he is. If you play the renaissance guitar, all of this is transferable, especially so if you are watching the baroque guitar want ads. And, as an aside, if you have a baroque guitar, I hope you've been noticing the scads of books becoming available on **Jo Bringmann's** facsimile site (and score scores of scores!): <http://www.jobringmann.de/facsimile-links>.

Many of us have become fixated on one instrument, right? And as lutenists we often choose a certain genre—it is what we do! I remember falling in love with ten-course music early on. I had a borrowed ten-course lute but was not allowed to experiment with stringing, and that avenue blocked letting me explore things like transitional tunings. Enter **Sigrun Richter**, who has made this rep-

ertoire her own world of discovery. She has spent years exploring this repertoire and has recorded a wonderful set of CDs to share. We have seen her name on the internet recently—performing with **Jean-Marie Poirier's** lute quartet—but it is equally gratifying to hear about her work on this previously underexplored avenue of the lute world. And often it's the bridges between that build great things: the LSA is extremely grateful to **Rainer Luckhardt** for interviewing Ms. Richter and **Mathias Rösel** for help with the translation.

Oh, and there are some lute songs! We've all noticed that **Sarge Gerbode** has put up an impressive amount of solo music on his website, and I want to compliment him on that. But expand your horizons and invite somebody over to "read through some stuff." They can be a singer or an instrumentalist, and maybe not an early musician, or terribly accomplished, but I hope they would be intrigued enough to turn the page and try the next one. This genre of music is the backbone of the sixteenth century repertoire, and lutenists would do well to understand this connection between lutenists and vocal music. So often we start with Dowland "because he is the best," but why not work your way up and see what's possible with steadier beats and easier polyphony? Once you understand what's going on here you have the entire run of sixteenth-century vocal music to choose from. In coming issues I hope to include more Italian and Spanish works for lute and voice. And if you readers have something you'd like to share—book, piece, or analysis—drop us an email. On behalf of all us I'd like to drop a note of appreciation to **Doug Hensely** who has been working his digital tail off in coordinating our Lute Forum. Every issue he diligently pesters the pros for insights into how to improve our players' from intention to fingers to music. It's a lot to cover!

So, have at it, peeps! Put this rag away, push the cat off your music chair, check your tunings, and let your mind wander over whether to use the left fourth finger, the right pinkie, or whether you want that b flatted or natural and let everything else drift away.

Sean Smith

The LSA has a New Treasurer: Melanie Nester

After receiving an associate degree in accounting from Laramie County Community College in 2012, Melanie Nester has quickly worked her way up the ranks. Starting as an assistant accountant, she is now the office manager at Global Spas, Stoves & Sunrooms. Melanie first encountered a lute while attending a renaissance faire in Texas! Isn't it interesting the way a tiny detail in one's life can suddenly blossom into so much more! We are very happy to have Melanie on board.

Here she is in her own words:

I'm a born and bred Wyomingite, hailing from the windy city of Cheyenne. I have two beautiful children, and I have been traveling through life with my love, Joe, for fourteen years next February. And we love dogs! We have two, our German short-haired pointer and our cairn Terrier.

I've been a music lover my whole life and have tried my hand at many instruments, but none stuck. My daughter, on the other hand, plays the violin, ukulele, and piano. I'm currently working on gaining her interest in the lute, but at thirteen she's pretty stubborn.

Since I have not a drop of musical talent, I have come to the LSA by way of my financial education and I hope to prove myself to be an asset (pun intended). Even more so, I hope our relationship lasts for for years and I make many bonds that lasts a lifetime!



The Rasgueado Technique, Part 3: Trio

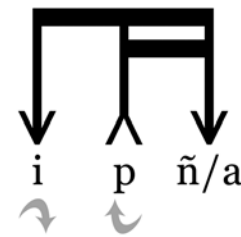
Pablo Zapico

I have named this technique *trio* because of the use of three fingers: thumb, index finger, and pinkie. If you extend these fingers the result is the position which is “I Love You” (letters L and Y) in American sign language. However, when it comes to strumming the strings, the hand position is inverted, with the fingers perpendicular to the palm of the hand, as if you wanted to touch your fingertips together. Meanwhile, the ring and middle fingers are stretched out in an extension of the forearm, staying away from the action, not interrupting the vibration of the strings being strummed. While this is my preferred fingering, I also want to mention the possibility of using the ring finger instead of the little finger. This second combination is preferred by flamenco guitarists because the index and ring fingers are equal in length, and due to the greater strength of the second compared to the little finger, which is necessary in an instrument with high string tension such as the flamenco guitar.

With basic rasgueado (“Rasgueado Technique, Part 1” in *LSA Quarterly* Vol. 53, Nos. 2 & 3) and the tresillo (in “Rasgueado Technique Part 2” in the *LSA Quarterly* Vol. 53, No. 4), you can play any rhythm, either binary or ternary. One might think that no other rasgueado techniques would be needed if it were not for the individual player's personal taste and a wish for more fingering options with the rasgueado possibilities that come from using each finger. Strength, length, placement, nail and fingertip, and the direction of the stroke all work together to determine these sound parameters. The result is that each finger combination produces a unique strum—with the same rhythmic motif each type of rasgueado produces a different sound. It is important to explore this richness before beginning the study of the trio, as you will likely be frustrated at first by the need to use the traditionally weak pinkie. You will barely have the strength to extend it with the speed that a clear and strong rasgueado requires, but practice helps considerably and you will soon have notable results.

In the trio our instructions begin with the binary rhythmic motif. This is a dactylic rhythm, which means it has one long followed by two short beats or note values. This same rhythmic combination could be played simply with the standard basic rasgueado, but the use of three fingers, in addition to producing a different sound, greatly reduces the effort required to get that sound. In the basic rasgueado, the right hand would have to bounce at the speed of the shortest note values (in this case the sixteenth notes). However, with this new rasgueado technique using the extra finger, the hand comfortably maintains the rhythm of the eighth notes while the little finger subdivides the notation between the thumb and the index finger strokes. If you had also opted to use the index finger on the basic rasgueado (remember that you

could substitute the middle finger for the index finger), it will be very comfortable and natural to incorporate this new combination. As explained in Part 1, using the index or middle finger in that rasgueado would facilitate the transition to various other combinations of types of rasgueados. For instance, if you use the middle finger, you will have already experienced a more comfortable transition to the fingering of the tresillo rasgueado.



Now it is time to begin practicing. You should make sure that the basic rasgueado (with index finger) is included in the trio rasgueado. It is exactly the same

movement with the sole exception of the additional extra stroke of the little finger. Because the hand only rotates two times but there are three strokes, the strum of little finger only gains power from the force of extending it to flick the strings. As your little finger completes the cycle extended, it also begins this way. It is therefore essential that you take advantage of bending it (bring it toward the inside of the hand) just as you make the upward thumb stroke.

First movement: flick the index finger downward. This is done with the rotation of the hand, facing the palm toward the ground. The thumb is already ready to strum.

Second movement: drag the thumb upward. Using the rotation of the hand, return the palm to face the guitar. Take advantage of this movement to bend the little finger.

Third movement: strum downward with the little finger. Using only this movement, extend it to flick. The hand does not move.

To learn these movements little by little, we will begin using Exercise 1 to master each stroke of the three fingers equally. Use extra effort on the little finger accent to make sure that its stroke does not come from the hand rotation, but exclusively from it being extended. If this is the first time you have used it like this, it will likely be weak. The objective of Exercises 2 to 4 is to increase the number of repetitions of this rasgueado, up to four. Use Exercises 2 and 3 to gain a good understanding of how to transform the basic rasgueado into the trio. Remember that you have to feel like you are inserting an extra finger, without disrupting the regular bounce of

your hand.

As in the previous tresillo rasgueado, which also has three strokes, and although it uses only two fingers, the best way to master and differentiate each finger properly is to play the three

**Remember that
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and duration of
any rasgueado,
the more you
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relaxing the mus-
cles of the hand.**



Initial position



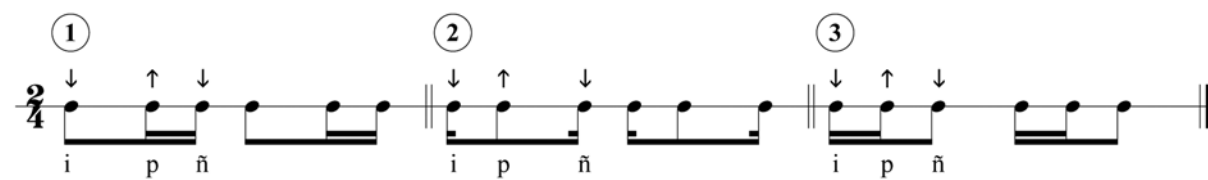
First movement



Second movement



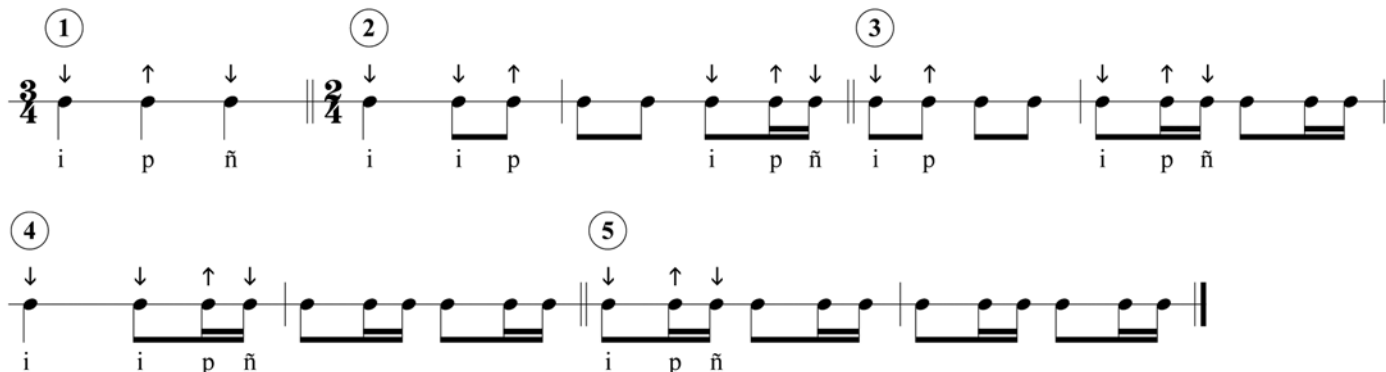
Third movement



Exercise 1



Exercise 2



Exercise 3



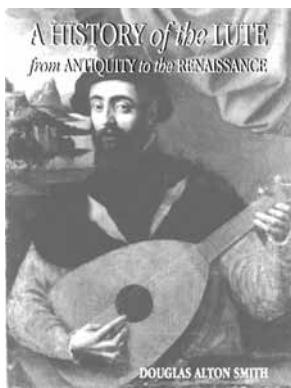
Exercise 4

existing rhythmic possibilities of the combination of one long and two short beats. With this practice, you will improve the independence of the three fingers and gain tone, precision, and confidence in these rasgueados.

If you have already mastered the tremolo with the tresillo rasgueado, you can do the same with the trio version. The rhythm here is not regular, but an acceleration of the looping combination of the three beats. In the beginning, the movements will be larger and more marked. As the speed increases, the hand does not bounce as much, but begins to hold position over the strings, rotating slightly. Then it is the fingers that make the greatest effort. Remember that the greater the need for speed and duration of any rasgueado, the more you should focus on relaxing the muscles of the hand. Otherwise, you will likely seize up and not be able to continue.

The possibilities of this rasgueado do not end here of course. Its rhythm can also be regular with ternary subdivision. In the next volume of “The Rasgueado Technique” you will find out how to get even more out of it, but before moving forward we have some work to do. Lastly, you will practice triplets. Each exercise takes one of the three fingers as the starting point for the rasgueado cycle. Apart from this, the entire technique and the movements of the trio are the same. Always put an accent on the starting finger and maintain this even in the sixteenth notes; thus, you will obtain a fun counter tempo accentuating every three notes instead of every two, as the binary subdivision would do.

Thank you to Sociedad de la Vihuela, el Laúd y la Guitarra for permission to publish a translation of this article which originally appeared as “Técnica de Rasgueado Vol. 3,” *Hispanica Lyra*. (2018), No. 24, 16-18.



A History of the Lute From Antiquity to the Renaissance by Douglas Alton Smith

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Les Accords Nouveaux—A Four-Part CD Series

Rainer Luckhardt Interviews Lutenist Sigrun Richter

Translation by Mathias Roesel



RL: The usual access route to the lute during the late 1970s and early 1980s more often than not was playing or studying classical guitar. Original tablatures for the lute were not easy to come by and lute players had to rely on a few generally accessible sources and editions. That is why the majority concentrated on works by John Dowland, Francesco da Milano, and Johann Sebastian Bach or Leopold Silvius Weiss for the baroque lute.

Your first CD, with works by Pierre Gaultier published in Rome in 1638, is the very first recording, as far as I know, to contain lute music in *accords nouveaux* (transitional tunings). What made you stumble upon this music and what attracted you so much that you made this recording?

SR: I have been curious about threshold periods between epochs because of changes between different styles and because they inspire new forms of expression. This has always freed special kinds of creativity, and even an instrument like the lute experiences new ideas each time these changes come about. At c. 1500 the renaissance lute evolved from the medieval lute that had previously been played with plectrums. Then came (and this is particularly exciting) the next big changes c. 1600. The thorough bass period starts in Italy, new types of instruments like the *arciliuto* and the *chitarone* are developed. At the same time lutenists north of the alps, in France, start to compose in the *style brisé* and to experiment with the new style of composition with lute tunings, which eventually solidified into the d minor baroque lute tuning (A d f a d' f').

In those days (1988-89) I was especially fascinated by French lute music and searched for the origins of that style and music showing the development of new French tunings—the so-called transitional tunings. The new French tunings could not possibly have started out of the blue. A microfilm of Pierre Gaultier's 1638 lute book fell into my hands. That was music that ought to be heard! I resolved to play it in order to learn about it from practice and to make it known to audiences. The idea was born to make a CD of it and that was the first step to the series of *Les Accords Nouveaux*.

RL: In his print Gaultier makes use of fewer than six different tunings. How many of them did you use for this recording? And how did you master the challenge of doing it with no more than two instruments within a limited range of recording time?

SR: Six different tunings indeed, and all can be heard in the recording. Only one suite is in d minor tuning (A d f a d' f'), typically written in d minor. I play it on an eleven-course baroque lute for the CD, yet without making use of the eleventh course.

All the other suites are played on a ten-course lute with the sixth course A. Starting from one of the *scordaturas*, e.g. A d g b d' f', I would then retune one or two courses, resulting in A d g b-flat d' f'; A-flat d g b-flat d' f'; A d g b d f-sharp. Using a somewhat thinner string for the first course, even the tuning of A d g b d' g' for the *bataille* turned out to be feasible. This piece, an example of the genre *battaglia*, is particularly remarkable because Gaultier includes a cannon shot in the music. At the end, instead of the praise for the victor, presented in the form of a triumphal march, the music instead depicts a hurried scattering.

RL: From your perspective, how are the most commonly used tunings, in respect to their different intervals, distinct from each other? What are their special charms? Is there a connection between a given tuning and a key or musical style?

SR: Each tuning evokes a distinct resonance of the lute. That effect may be familiar from retuning the basses on the baroque lute, when they more or less resonate with the upper six courses. It will become even stronger when you retune the upper courses. The resonance of the lute and its tone color will change. The character of different keys will become more intense. Each tuning suits particular keys. That applies not only to Pierre Gaultier, of course, but to all other composers like Mesangeau, Bouvier, Dufaut, etc., which can be heard on the second CD of the series with music from Pierre Ballard's prints of 1631 and 1638.

RL: Yes, your recording *Les Accords Nouveaux II* (1996) focuses on Pierre Ballard's 1631 and 1638 prints, *Tabulature de differents auteurs sur les accords nouveaux*. Are Pierre Gaultier's arrangements of the same music strikingly different from Ballard's collection in terms of style?

SR: The style is the same—characteristic of the new French lute style. But there is also the composers' personal styles, especially with music by René Mesangeau, François Dufaut, or Bouvier. Pierre Gaultier's ballets and his bataille as well as Mesangeau's and Bouvier's branles owe rather more to the renaissance style.

François Dufaut may have developed his early playing style in accords nouveaux and later continued his work entirely using d minor tuning. With this tuning, any key may be played without the need to constantly retune all courses. Therefore I dedicated a whole recording to Dufaut—*Les Accords III*, featuring some great music.

RL: Besides these two important prints, are there other sources or manuscripts with music in accords nouveaux that provide new information about this style of music?

SR: While I was occupied with the first CD recording, François-Pierre Goy's extensive thesis, "Les sources manuscrites de la musique pour luth sur les 'Accords Nouveaux' (vers 1624–1710)," appeared almost at the same time. Since then, François-Pierre Goy and Andreas Schlegel have published an interesting web page that deals with the sophisticated topic of the new transitional tunings. It offers links too, for example, a list of sources with music in accords nouveaux, a data base of any known pieces in accords nouveaux, PAN.

So this topic has been explored now much more than it was in earlier times. My compliments to both for their ongoing work!

RL: A number of years passes before the next recording—*Les Accords Nouveaux III* (2015), which contains works by Dufaut. Did you proceed with further research on the field of accords nouveaux during this time?

SR: In order to take a creative break before recording the third CD of the series, I turned to the Italian repertoire of the same period. As I mentioned in the beginning, at around 1600 we are dealing with a huge style change—the transition from the renaissance to the baroque era. The thorough bass period starts, musical style

undergoes changes which necessitate changed instruments. This affected both composers and luthiers. The arciliuto, the liuto attiorbato, and the chitarrone come into being, mostly fourteen-course instruments with their enormous bass range.

I concentrated on different types of these instruments. We read in Kapsberger about the nineteen-course chitarrone with chromatic tuning. We hear from Piccinini about the chitarrone with brass strings. In order to understand these phenomena I had the respective instruments built for myself, thus being able to share this extended sound universe with audiences.

Both instruments sound best as solo instruments, as well as continuo instruments on the CD *Del Cielo d'Amor: Le Musiche di Sigismondo d'India* with Gundula Anders, soprano, and Hille Perl, viol, lirone.

RL: Accords nouveaux seem to have been used predominantly by French lutenists, while Italy and Germany in the first half of the seventeenth century stuck to the "old" G tuning. How would you explain that?

SR: There is no exact explanation. All we can do is to observe that Italian players stuck to the so-called old tuning (viel), except for the tuning of the chitarrone. In Germany continuo instruments became established as well, but for solo music from 1630, the baroque lute with d minor tuning and consequently French style takes center stage.

RL: The d minor tuning that later was in general use appeared in Germany during the second half of the seventeenth century, seemingly without being preceded by the various tuning variants used by French lutenists. As far as I know, Esaïas Reusner's prints are the first to make use of the new tuning. His father curiously stuck to the ten-course lute in viel ton tuning in his print of 1645, *Musicalischer Lustgarten*, whereas Esaïas the younger in 1667 and after that uses mainly the d minor tuning. Your most recent CD, *Les Accords Nouveaux IV* (2017), is entirely works by Esaïas Reusner the younger (among them three suites with several tunings). To what extent do you observe French influence in the works of both Reusners?

SR: The new French lute tuning was actually used by Esaïas the younger exclusively. It is said that he was taught by French lutenists. Things will have been just the same with any other German lutenist of that period. After all, anything French was all the fashion of that time at any aristocratic court.

Esaïas Reusner the younger uses the *ton de Mercure* in as many as one third of all movements in his second book, *Neue Lautenfrüchte* of 1676. For Reusner, it's clearly not about searching for a new tuning anymore because the baroque lute with the French tuning A d f a d' f' had long been established. His intention seems to have been the quest for a new tone color. Using this tuning, the lute actually acquires a considerably fuller and warmer sound. That print contains another remarkable suite in the key of d minor, that of all things is not intended for the corresponding and comfortable d minor tuning, but for the scordatura of A d f a c' e'. This is where another outstanding sound is created. For Reusner,

it's once again about that particular effect.

My CD *Les Accords Nouveaux IV* with Reusner's suites in different tunings nicely rounds off the whole series, from the first attempts at modernization up to pure sound experimentation and effect.

RL: It seems to me that in spite of your years of interest in accords nouveaux and the CD recordings, general interest in that kind of music has stayed moderate. Is that your perspective as well? And if so, what can you say to today's lutenists to give them reasons to try transitional tunings, perhaps so they can experience that "new" old sound universe?

SR: Yes, accords nouveaux is a kind of special field of interest and will probably stay so. It would be going too far, I suppose, to give precise instructions concerning string material and the best type of lute. On those topics, I am happy to give advice as part of my regular courses. Those who are curious about this special sound, and do not shy away from retuning their lutes, will today find help and surveys of tunings and sources on François-Pierre Goy and Andreas Schlegel's aforementioned website.

RL: From your experience, which string material is suited best for experimenting with transitional tunings?

SR: We should always appreciate the sound of gut strings, I think the gut will remain the most beautiful sound. However, Aquila strings are a good modern alternative. Mimmo Peruffo did some research about original strings and their production, but he also produces synthetic strings, New Nylgut and Loaded Nylgut. They bring us surprisingly close to the sound of gut strings, and I therefore use them pretty much.

RL: Have you played accords nouveaux music in concerts? How did the audience react?

SR: My concerts of music in accords nouveaux are consistently met with good response. I often receive comments about how the multitude of tone colors is perceived.

RL: You grappled with transitional tunings for several decades, an occupation which certainly took much time and energy, but I presume there were some other musical tasks that occupied you during that time, and perhaps still do. Besides the baroque lute,

are there other lute-family instruments or musical styles that have captivated you?

SR: The arciliuto and the chitarrone have already been mentioned. The early renaissance, for example the time of Francesco da Milano, Spinacino, Marco d'Aquila, continues to fascinate me as another threshold period. Likewise, my concerts sometimes focus on music for the ten-course lute by English, French, and Italian composers. You could say I enjoy the variety of the entire repertoire, so I always focus for just a few months before moving from one project to the next.

Another task that I tackled was to install in my house in Italy a permanent exhibition of my lute collection together with an alternating picture documentary on lute iconography and lute building. Most of the instruments were built by Nico van der Waals between 1992 and 2017. I have set up as the Museo del Liuto in Monterone, Sestino (Arezzo). That's where I give regular lute master classes on my own and voice and lute courses together with colleagues. Talks and recitals round off the summer program. Our little medieval village because of that has gained the name "Castello del Liuto."

RL: Will there someday be another CD—*Accords Nouveaux V*? Are you presently planning other CD projects?

SR: Long after the d minor tuning in Germany had become standard practice, significant compositions with modified tunings, like the previously mentioned one in Reusner's print, are still to be found. These tunings were certainly not used any more in the effort of new tunings, but served to provide an appealing sound. We find examples of them in the Roth manuscript, Darmstadt, and in the much later Harrach manuscript, Rohrau Castle. I chose my current concert program from these three sources. I currently travel with this program in order to introduce this rarely heard music to the audience.

Perhaps there will be another CD, *Accords Nouveaux V*, and also a CD with English lute music and lute songs is being discussed, but it is too early to say for sure.

RL: Besides your work with accords nouveaux, Italian lute music of the early-seventeenth century, and concerts, you certainly were or are giving lessons. Where did or do they take place?



SR: I tutored college students and amateurs for more than thirty years and trained young lutenists at the Musikhochschule, Saarbrücken, and at the Konservatorium, Frankfurt.

On a regular basis, I give master classes two or three times a year. One of them is in August in Schwäbisch Gmünd, Germany, another in April in Monterone, Sestino, Italy, and soon there will be still another in the autumn.

RL: Where and how can your CDs be ordered?

SR: The CDs can be ordered on the Ambitus Musikproduktion website: www.ambitus

- *Les Accords Nouveaux I*, Pierre Gaultier—Les Oeuvres Rome 1638; amb 97828
- *Les Accords Nouveaux II*, Tabulature de différents auteurs sur les accords nouveaux 1631 und 1638; amb 97921
- *Les Accords Nouveau III*, François Dufaut; amb 96956
- *Les Accords Nouveaux IV*, Esaias Reusner; amb 96970

RL: Thank you very much, Sigrun, for the interview.

SR: Thank you, Rainer, for the interest in my work and the interview.



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LSA Chapters

I am pleased by the interest shown in opening local chapters. If you would like to reach out to LSA members in your area to promote a sense of community events and share information, please contact me. You do not have to be a professional musician to lead a chapter. In fact, an enthusiastic amateur with good communication skills is ideal for making connections and bringing a community together. Some of the chapters currently cover a large region, so if you want to concentrate on a smaller area within a large chapter or overlap an area, that would be fine: the goal is to connect the lute community.

Kate Benessa, bouhou@frii.com

Rocky Mountain Chapter

Covering Colorado, Utah, Idaho,
Montana, and Wyoming
Chapter Contact: Kate Benessa,
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Covering Iowa, Indiana, Illinois,
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Pegasus Early Music: Thoughts from Fifteen Years

Deborah Fox



Members of Pegasus Early Music (Deborah Fox is holding the theorbo)

One of the joys of playing the lute is the opportunity to collaborate in varied ensembles with different musicians. The magic that happens between musicians in front of an audience is something that motivates and inspires me. I like making things happen, and I feel lucky to have been able to do this both as an ensemble player and the director of an organization now in its fifteenth season. In this article I'll share some history and ideas that may be useful to you or encourage you to get your music out there!

Pegasus Early Music grew out of the classic musician daydream of "wouldn't it be great to play a concert of such-and-such music with so-and-so." It was also partly a way for me, as a lutenist, to figure out how to stop traveling so much. In my community of Rochester, NY, it came at a good time, as it was during a lull in professional early music activities (a couple of organizations had gone dormant or defunct). My idea from the beginning was not to form a standing ensemble, but rather to perform lots of different lute-inclusive early music with different friends and colleagues as the repertoire warranted. As it turned out, over the years a core group has emerged, ever-expanding but not exclusive.

In our fifteen years, Pegasus has produced more than eighty different concerts, ranging from solo presentations (Paul O'Dette, David Breitman, Kristian Bezuidenhout, etc.) to medieval, renaissance, and baroque chamber music, baroque orchestras, even a vespers and an opera or two. Most of our concerts have at least one lute in them (because of course I like to play), more if

I can afford it (because the only thing that's better than one lute is two lutes); but when, for example, my friends the Brahms historical performance experts (Ironwood, from Sydney, Australia) come to town, I am happy to be an audience member.

I believe the audience that has developed here for Pegasus enjoys the variety of music we've been able to offer. Our seasons include both vocal and instrumental music; sacred and secular; large and small numbers of personnel; sometimes programs with dancers or poets, and once, a doctor!; sometimes one large work (Buxtehude's *Membra Jesu Nostri*, for example); and, often, themed concerts that allow us both to dig deeply into a theme or to program unusual combinations of music (for example: music by women composers, music mentioned in Pepys's diaries, baroque composers that begin with Z, a program of ground basses, Venice, poetry and music, and so on). I've learned some interesting things about programming along the way:

- If you present it in a compelling way, you can program almost anything
- If you program something that everyone knows (Vivaldi), you can also introduce them to something uncommon or unusual (Zappa)
- And once your audience knows and trusts you, you can try almost anything!

This has all taken years to grow, of course. To begin, I asked several friends if they would play concerts for a low fee. These fees were covered by a small loan (repaid as soon as possible) and by ticket sales. As we grew, my goal has been to continue to raise artist fees, and to advocate for our musicians as professionals. You won't believe how many people think that we play concerts, with all the practicing and rehearsing that goes into them, for free "just because we love it"!!!

Other initial lessons I learned that might be useful to hear about:

- Start small but have a complete plan. As I mentioned, I started with a few musician friends in a small venue, with a three-concert series planned. If people see you are serious, they will take you seriously.
- Audience building: I borrowed some mailing lists from other organizations with related musical interest (renaissance choir, chamber music series, a defunct early music orchestra). There's an etiquette to this! Some organizations are happy to give you their list, some will let you use it as a one-time deal, some will exchange names with you. And some will simply say no. These digital days it is easy to exchange ads or notices in e-news blasts, and that can be very effective.
- Donations are the heart of a growing arts organization. Before we became a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, we used Early Music America as a fiscal umbrella for our donations. This is a very legal, easy way for your donors to make a tax-deductible contribution to your organization and have you receive the money.
- Ask for help! To organize concerts and play in them is a lot of work. People like to be useful. A board and/or volunteers are the front line for getting things done. Local schools and universities sometimes have internship programs; Pegasus has thrived in part because of our fabulous interns from the Eastman School of Music.
- Become a presence. If you are starting a series or an ensemble, someone has to be the face of the organization. The audience has to know who you are and why you are doing this. This can be difficult for those of us who are introverts (perhaps most lutenists?!), but being genuine and enthusiastic in front of an audience is very important—and wins you many friends who will support you and your music (see above: trust).

There's more to Pegasus than the concert series, though. We want to support and encourage young early musicians as they start their careers. With grants from the Farash Foundation and Early Music America, we started a program called Pegasus Rising. We offer young professional early musicians the opportunity for a modest but professional fee and expenses so they can do a free concert in Rochester, preferably in an edgy or unusual venue. This supports the musicians and also encourages new audiences.

The young musicians have to apply to the program, and receive mentoring as they learn to promote and organize a concert. They learn some valuable lessons, from their first application to finding themselves speaking and performing in front of a live

audience. Some already know a lot about what goes into putting on a concert. But for others, learning how to write a press release and send it out, create publicity, organize a program, arrange for a venue, are all new educational experiences.

The Pegasus administrator and I work through the steps with the young artists—here's a template for a press release, here's how to contact a venue and what to look for (accessibility, quiet ventilation systems, rehearsal time, arrangements for refreshments and donations, seating, hours of availability, and so on), here are our social media templates, here's the program format, and so on. We discuss the options for venues, the pros and cons of each, and review the contract. We have a timeline that helps to organize all these tasks, and gives the young artists a sense of what needs to happen.

Our audiences are happy to attend these free concerts, and enjoy the variety of venues, which have included a beer hall at Happy Hour, a music store full of guitars, coffee shops, and churches and chapels around our city. For some of our Pegasus Rising musicians, this is the first time they will receive a professional paycheck; it is a thrill! And for Pegasus, mentoring these young artists and introducing them to an audience ensures that our field will continue to blossom.

Creating Pegasus has been one of the most rewarding and creative projects of my life for two reasons. The first is personal: I have had the chance to explore so much music with musicians I admire and to help young artists grow. The second is more universal: I am convinced that music changes lives, that people enjoy music because it helps them reflect, heal, or simply go to a different place for a while. Or because they enjoy the interaction of the musicians onstage. Or they like sitting in a quiet place. If Pegasus can help make that happen, then together we have achieved something good in the world.



A Pegasus Rising concert in a coffee bar in downtown Rochester, Arnie Tanimoto and Glenna Curran, cellos

A Book of Lute Songs from 1553

Sean Smith



In 1545 Pierre Phalese published his first collection of lute solos, *Des Chansons Reduictz en Tabulature de Lut à deux, Trois, et Quatre parties ... aux Dispense de Pierre Phaleys Libraire, MDXLV*. This ottavo format edition was reprinted twice in the next two years and the house would publish six more books over the next five years. Printing lute music appeared to be lucrative with subtle differences even among fairly similar books suggesting a market for diversity, even among a static roster of songs. Many of his tablatures have no precedent or attribution. On the other hand a high percentage are reprinted intabulations by Francesco, Borrono, da Crema, Gerle, Narvaez, Valderrábano, and others.

After a two-year lute-publishing hiatus, Phalese obtained his own patent to print and brought out his first quarto book, the *Hortus Musarum*, ... Lovani, MD LII, and in 1553 the *Horti Musarum Secunda Pars*, ... The 1552 book's larger format allowed readers to play solos uninterrupted by page turns and the doubled ratio of pieces to binding reduced costs. The duets were printed so they could be read from opposite sides of a table, and the solo arrangements, while occasionally flirting with knuckle-breakers, could usually find favor among intermediate players. As Homer too sometimes nods, so Phalese contains his share of mistakes. While the solos of *ricercars* and intabulations are fairly accurate, nearly all the duets of chansons need serious editorial work. I recommend Lynda Sayces's edition from the the Lute Society (England), for these.

The *Secunda pars* breaks new ground for Phalese in its collection of arrangements for voice, or other instrument, and lute. It is worth noting that the vocal mensural line is not reversed for someone reading across the table, but neither is it printed concurrently above the lute part as every vocal/lute part had been previously printed. Since a second instrumentalist could not have been the lutenist, I'll conclude that if two were performing they were on the same side of the table and, further, that this was an entertainment intended for an audience.

The table of contents, too, suggests a new repertory coming into play. Hitherto, his choice of chansons generally listed the same contents as many previous collections around the continent.

In the 1553 collection, however, of the 29 titles only three secular pieces had been previously printed by him: "Cessez mes yeulx," "Si purtigarado," and "Incessament" and the ever-popular Josquin cycles of "Benedicta es" and "Stabat mater." The remaining motet, "In te Domine speravin" is by Lupus Hellinck (1493 or 1494–1541). In 1518 Hellinck was in the employment of Sigismondo d'Este in Ferrara, so his inclusion alongside Josquin thirty years later is somewhat justified. This intabulation copied from Valderábano, albeit with errors, of his most popular motet is the only lute setting to survive of his works.

Phalese notes his starting pitches for the cantus performer in terms of the fretted pitch on the lute. The ranges and placement of tonics in Josquin's "Benedicta es" presents food for thought. All previous settings of Josquin's opus had placed the tonic on the sixth course open on a G lute, yet here we have it set a fourth higher. If we were to accompany the singer with a bass lute in D it is returned to the general tessitura. The second movement however, "Per illud ave," is paraphrased from either Teghi or Gintzler. Here one would need to set down the bass lute and pick up the tenor to remain consistent. Alternately I have reset the accompaniment for the "Benedicta es" and "Nunc mater" for a tenor lute, i.e., a fourth lower.

The number of courses necessary to accompany is another interesting factor. There are six chansons and the motet, "Benedicta es," in its entirety, that don't call for the sixth course. If we accept the occasional practice of raising of the tonic B flat on the sixth course up an octave, then we are granted an additional seven chansons. Admittedly, by removing the cantus we diminish the necessary lute range but it also facilitates transposing the lute part down a fourth, and also allows the possibility of a five-course instrument. I include two pieces transposed down: "Cessez mes yeulx" and the "Benedicta es."

I have retained the note values and have moved the cantus lines to that of a G lute. A facsimile may be found at the LSA Digital Facsimiles collection. I must express my appreciation to Gail Gillespie for her help in parts of this project.

A Comparison of “Cesseez mes yeulx” Settings

We find the first chanson in the *Horti Musarum* set anonymously for solo lute in both the 1552 and 1563 Phalese collections. Later prints would reprint the latter with minor variations. As you can see in the lined up versions they vary frequently, not just by the style of texture and passaggi but their choice of *ficta*. The cantus line contains no accidentals, leaving that to the the performers, yet we see from the solos that there are many *ficta* adjustments. Here I have lowered the cantus and its accompaniment by a fourth (and added a flat) to facilitate comparison. It is quite possible that the song’s progression in popularity over the next ten years reflected a difference in taste for both the passagi and the *ficta* during that decade, and what sounded sweet in 1563 might sound “off” in 1552, so we should be careful in mixing styles. I simply include them to show how they advanced and one’s options both then and now.

Cesseez mes yeulx

Thomas Crecquillon

[a] in prima.

Phalese 1553, 1

Phalese 1552, p42

Phalese 1563, 16v

9 10 11 12 13 14 15

16 17 18 19 20 21

16 17 18 19 20 21

22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38

31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38

39 40 41 42 43 44 45

46 47 48 49 50



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The First International Conference on Lute Study in Higher Education

Rosemary Hodgson

On September 27-29, 2019, The University of the Arts Bremen, Germany, hosted the First International Conference on Lute Study in Higher Education. This inaugural conference was the brainchild of codirectors Peter Croton (Schola Cantorum Basiliensis and Bern University of the Arts, president—German Lute Society) and Joachim Held (University of the Arts Bremen and Royal Conservatoire in The Hague) and was a collaboration between University of Bremen and the German Lute Society. News of the conference had created much excitement around the globe as Croton and Held gathered a stellar lineup of speakers, including John Griffiths, Paul O'Dette, Franco Pavan, Anthony Bailes, Michael Lowe, Pascale Boquet, Nigel North, Bor Zuljan, Xavier Diaz-Latorre, and Jakob Lindberg.

The conference began with a reception and warm welcome by the directors to the diverse gathering of international attendees, ranging from esteemed scholars to budding professionals. Two lute society presidents, Ciska Mertens (Netherlands) and Cathy Liddell (USA), addressed the group, inviting us to reflect on the role that lute societies have played in the growth of interest in the lute and transmission of information, as well as what these societies might look like moving forward.

The opening speaker, John Griffiths, presented “Historical Pedagogy—Education to Match our Performance Aspira-

tions,” which began with an overview of where the lute has come from since its initial revival in the nineteenth and early twentieth century and how it arrived in the “modern era” as the instrument we know today. It was fascinating to focus on the pioneering aspect of research, performance, and construction; how much has been learned and where the frontiers still lie. Griffiths examined nineteenth-century musical tutors and post-romantic instrumental pedagogy as they relate to technical development of modern instruments, and how historical informed performance teaching can redefine pedagogical process for lute scholars and performers by understanding the cultural practices of renaissance musicians, including polyphony, the role of improvisation, and the use of tablature and primary sources as teaching tools.

Saturday’s lectures commenced with Joachim Held’s paper “Teaching Basso Continuo at the Master Level.” He clearly outlined the role of continuo players in playing the bass line. He also acknowledged many of the challenges faced by lone plucked continuo players in relating to musical directors, what a plucked instruments continuo role is, how to satisfy the director and keep “true” to historically informed performance practice. There was much interest in the audience for this topic, as it is one faced by many active performers. The suggestion of a lute conference for music directors was raised, with a few cheers and smiles. The idea



Speakers at the conference



The front row: Tanja Skok, Xavier Diaz-Latorre, John Griffiths, and Nigel North

of lutes in ensemble and how classes can be run to explore the role of a plucked continuo group were also explored. Held examined the change in continuo style of playing as baroque music and national styles developed.

In his paper entitled “Teaching Historical Lute Technique in the Twenty-first Century: What Do We Really Know and How Can We Reconstruct What is Not Adequately Documented?” Paul O’Dette encouraged the study of early lute repertoire (not starting with Dowland and going backward) and suggested a reexamination of right-hand indications in lute tablature. For example, the possibility that a dot above a cipher could indicate the use of the thumb whereas the dot below the cipher is accepted as an indication for the use of the index finger. Furthermore, O’Dette gave examples from later in the sixteenth century of the dot below the cipher meaning “upstroke” more generally and therefore could relate to an index, middle, or ring finger being employed, and explored the idea that there was a wider use of the ring finger than might currently be accepted.

Franco Pavan wowed the auditors with his stories of uncovering a whole “library of tablature” in a musical collection kept in the archive of the Albani family. The eleven volumes contain music dating from 1580-1640 written for the lute, chitarrone, cetra, and chitarrino and previously unknown works by Roman composers including Girolamo Kapsberger. With pedagogical indications included, this is one of the most significant

discoveries of plucked string music this century, and the result of a lifetime of dedicated sleuthing and research by Pavan to unearth this treasure.

In his poetically titled paper “Over Stars and Under Bridges—A Case Study in Authority: Right-Hand Placement,” Anthony Bailes played the devil’s advocate to highlight the confusion that gesture in renaissance and baroque portraiture can inflict when used to interpret lute technique: particularly in relation to the location of the placement of the right hand on the belly of the lute. Bailes drew attention to primary sources that discuss a change of tone color on the lute and suggested that the position of the hand should not be confused with the plucking point on the string.

As the only lute maker amongst the presenters, Michael Lowe discussed the importance of lute teachers understanding the full details and complex history of the lute in his paper entitled “The Historical Lute: What Lute Teachers Need to Know.” He encouraged teachers to be aware of the instruments themselves

and the way in which they were used. He stated that without a knowledge of the culture out of which the music grew, there is a danger that students will form their aesthetic from twenty-first century considerations, even going so far in some cases to be playing instruments that never actually existed.

Pascale Boquet’s paper “Teaching Lute to Children” shared her heart-warming stories of children learning the lute from an early age. She discussed the use of small instruments and



Pascale Boquet, Bor Zuljan, and Nigel North



Fred Jacobs, Franco Pavan, Paul O'Dette, and Catherine Liddell

also the benefits and accessibility of renaissance guitar. Her extensive knowledge in this field has also been focused into publications that are available through the French Lute Society. There is an emphasis on group playing and improvisation in classes, and she was able to show wonderful video footage of budding young lute players that many in the audience found both inspiring and moving.

The final presentation of Saturday was by Nigel North. "TUT, TUT or the Well-Articulated Lutenist—Articulation in Lute Music, 1500-1750" explored the term "tut" used by Thomas Mace in *Musicke's Monument* (1676). He explained how this was an example of a type of shortened note that had existed in decades prior, for example, as might be suggested by the eighth-note rests in the first bar of the B section of "Lady Hunsdon's Puffe" in the Folger manuscript. Establishing that ideal model for musical expression throughout the sixteenth-eighteenth centuries was rhetoric, North subtly demonstrated how right-hand fingering in primary sources can heighten expression on the lute.

Sunday morning began with Bor Zuljan's presentation "Ricercar una fantasia: Teaching Contrapuntal Improvisation to Lute Students." He emphasized that in the sixteenth-century improvisation of polyphony was considered one of the highest achievements of the art of the lutenist, and as such should be included in our approach to historically informed performance practice. Zuljan has been creating a methodology that reconstructs this practice within a pedagogical framework, and he can imagine a time where lute players in the twenty-first century could conceivably be improvising their own four-part fantasias as part of their artistic programming and daily expression on their instrument. His presentation culminated with his own four-part improvised polyphonic fantasia, which was thoroughly appreciated by the audience.

In his paper "Improvisation and Composition on the Baroque Guitar within the Context of HIP," Xavier Diaz-Latorre discussed the roots of dance and song in relation to plucked-string playing and where these traditions continue unbroken to the twenty-first century, for example in the fandango of Mexico. He then demystified that Laberitos Ingenicos table in the beginning of Gaspar Sanz's *Instrucción de Música sobre la Guitarra Española* (1674), and demonstrated how by using small sketches of an original composition a baroque guitar improvisation can be crafted to reflect the form and style of the seventeenth century.

"Reflections on How to Prepare the Aspiring Lutenist for the Real World of the Twenty-First Century" was the final presentation; Given by Jakob Lindberg, it rounded off the pedagogical focus of the conference by posing questions to both students and teachers alike as well as imparting practical wisdom. Drawing on more than forty years of experience as performer and teacher, Lindberg covered the topics of strings, instrument size, solo and ensemble playing and programming, as well as how one's mindset can affect the musical experience of the lute for player and listener.

There followed a roundtable discussion where presenters and auditors were free to ask questions or make comments and suggestions. Peter and Joachim were applauded for their effort in codirecting this hugely successful conference, and it was also announced that there are moves to publish the papers in the near future. Most excitingly, there was also an announcement of The Second International Conference on Lute Study in Higher Education being planned as part of the Basel Lute Days, a coproduction of the German Lute Society and the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis. The provisional dates are September 15-19, 2021.

The First International Conference on Lute Study in Higher Education, was a very special event. Magical elements for me included each speaker receiving such respect from their colleagues, the ample question time after each paper that encouraged discussions that flowed into the coffee breaks, and two wonderfully inclusive dinners for friends old and new. This reflection is only a thumbnail sketch of what was experienced. United by our passion for the lute, its music, and pedagogy, we had journeyed from around the world from as far afield as Russia, the UK, Japan, Australia, and the USA. Some people mentioned that they were shocked that I had come all the way from Australia to attend. However, as we listened to each of the eleven papers, which took one hour to present but were backed with a lifetime of dedication, research, and experience, I for one felt very grateful to have been present and walked away bestowed with a great responsibility for the future of our instrument, which is an honor to bear.

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The Lute Forum

Comments from Lute Teachers

The Lute Forum is a column where you will be seeing comments from lute teachers about various aspects of playing the lute and other historical plucked stringed instruments. Contact column curator Douglas Hensley (douglashensley@shaw.ca) if you have questions or comments for future columns.

The question for this edition of the Forum was “How do you practice?” and the responses I got from Ronn, Paul, and Lucas all provide great ideas and approaches. Make the most of them!

Doug Hensley



Paul Beier:

How you practice is, in my opinion, the most important consideration in becoming a good instrumentalist; more important, even, than having a good teacher. Here are a few considerations for learning to practice well:

Practice space and a good chair

How many times have I seen students, who may be very capable of playing well, squirm and struggle on their chair in a concert? It is because they practice at home every which way, on the bed, on the couch, bent over a table, and then find themselves unused to simply sitting on a regular chair and performing. Here's my advice: Set up a special practice space at home that has a good chair, a sturdy music stand, a metronome, good lighting, a table to put your music, and a full-length mirror.

Posture

Sit relaxed but upright, both feet firmly planted in front of you. Your legs should not be crossed, and you should not use a foot stool. If you do, your lower spine will be in an unhealthy position, and you will develop back problems later on, if you do not already have them. I highly recommend working on good posture with an expert in techniques such as Alexander, Feldenkrais or yoga. With

good posture you can channel all of your physical energy and tension to your hands and fingers, and to the music.

Warm-up exercises

If you do them, your playing will improve more quickly, and your practice of the actual music will be more effective. Exercises are really only useful if they are done consistently, every day. Think of it like brushing teeth—you just do it, every day, without having to decide each day if you really feel like it. It is a habit that is, for many people, difficult to initiate, but once you get into the daily rhythm of it, it's easy to maintain. Caution, however—it is not so important exactly what exercises you do, but rather how you do them. The idea is to form good playing habits, but if you do them wrong, you will form bad habits and do more harm than good! My advice is to cultivate a great variety of exercises, for each hand, for coordination between the hands, and for speed. An exercise that you know only too well does not help much, as your brain is no longer working very hard. So your exercises should always be challenging and aimed at your weak spots. I often make up exercises based on the particular technical difficulties of the pieces I'm working on.

Slow practice

Of course we aim to play a piece of music “up to speed,” but if you do this before actually having learned to play it well, you risk forming lots of bad habits, which will prevent you from ever really playing it well. The answer is to practice new pieces very slowly. It is hard to practice slowly, since we really want to speed up, so to maintain the slow speed use a metronome.

Memorize

If you really want to play well, I think memorization is very useful. This is a skill that is acquired through practice—it might take you a week to memorize your first piece, but if you work on memorization every day, soon it will take just a few hours.

Sight-read

This is good to work on in and of itself. Just take a book of tablature and read through it, without trying to learn each piece. Set aside time to do this regularly and you will find there are many benefits, not the least of which is getting to know the repertoire!



Ronn McFarlane:

Here is a link to Ronn's article on practicing:
https://ronnmcfarlane.com/site/assets/files/1148/btb-02_how-to-practice.pdf.



Lucas Harris on Practicing Ensemble Pieces:

Sometimes when we're planning to play music in ensembles, it is less obvious how to practice and prepare in a way that sets you up for success. Here are a few ideas that might be useful to you.

1. Make sure your instrument is ready to work reliably

- Make sure it's clear what type of instrument(s) you need to bring to the project.
- You owe it to your collaborators to show up to rehearsal with a well-maintained instrument that doesn't buzz and plays in tune. Replace any strings or frets that need it, lube any sticky pegs, etc.
- Have at the very least an extra chanterelle in the case (pre-stretched if possible).
- Find out the pitch you're working at ($a'=415$, $a'=440$ etc.) and the temperament if possible so you can show up with your frets organized to play well in tune with your ensemble.

2. Make sure your music is in order

- Usually you want to be using the same edition as the others in the group to save rehearsal time.

- Decide if you will play from a score or from a part. If it is a part, have a score for reference if you can, and use it to write some useful information into the part: rhythmic cues, text cues, orchestration changes, etc.
- Enlarge your music if it's difficult to see, or find (or make!) a clearer copy.
- Write bar numbers in if you don't have them—to the left of each system.
- Have a plan for how you will turn your pages and not have to stop playing. There are different ways of doing this, but organizing your music so you have a rest or section break at page turns is probably the safest.
- If it is continuo, write in your figures ahead of time. If there are other chordal instruments, have a plan for cross-checking the figures with those players before rehearsal begins—you don't want to need more than an occasional figure-check when the rest of the group is present.
- I like to organize my music into a ring binder in concert order, or into a playlist if I'm reading from a tablet.

3. Get familiar with the music

- Listen to a recording, or a couple of them. Read the liner notes.
- If it is vocal music, make sure you understand the words. If it is in English, do you really know what it's about? Could you paraphrase it using modern language? If it is another language, I like to write the translation into my score by hand, even if I understand the language. Somehow it helps me internalize the text if I've written it out with my own hand.
- Learn something about the composers if they are new to you. Where did they work and what are they known for?
- Immerse yourself a bit in the period and style you're working in. French baroque cantatas? Elizabethan dances? Spanish villancicos? What are the stylistic parameters and rules of thumb you can go by? Read a book or ask somebody for resources if the repertoire area is new to you.
- What genre does the piece belong to (pavan, canzonetta, louvre, siciliana, etc.)? What is its form (binary, ternary, through composed, da capo, etc.)? How is that going to shape your interpretation?
- What solo repertoire comes from the same period? This might give you some great clues on how lutenists of the time/place would have used their instrument in an ensemble.

4. Know the notes

Your practicing should alternate between these two strategies:

- ♦ **Playing mode:** play in tempo *without stopping*. Do not slow down or go back and play something again if you make a mistake or don't play everything. Simplify your part if you need to, even if it means you're playing only downbeats or only bass notes—but *stay in time*. You'll add more detail later as you get to know the piece.
- ♦ **Practice mode:** isolate and problem-solve any difficult areas you noticed when in playing mode. Practice them very slowly until you've worked out a reliable solution.
- Try to find out what tempo your collaborators want to work

at. If you do not think you will manage to play most of the notes with the practice time you can spare, try suggesting an alternative piece, or ask for another instrumentalist to join the group who can help you.

- Practice faster movements slowly with a metronome, raising it little by little to the performance speed, or even a bit faster to give yourself a comfort zone. Consider simplifying the part, even for the performance. It is more satisfying for the audience to hear the piece with a few notes left out but at the right speed.
- If it is continuo, try starting with just the bass line. Before you work out a realization, consider strong/weak beats, long/short notes, the bowings of a cellist/gambist or breathing/articulations of a bassoonist. It is all there right in the bass line alone—but may get clouded when you start adding chords.
- If it is a song, *sing* the vocal part, in whatever octave you can, even if it sounds terrible. If you do not know the language it is in, just use a neutral syllable (doo or la, etc.). And/or SPEAK the text in rhythm. Eventually when you can do this reliably, see if you can accompany yourself at the same time.
- Know the music well enough that you can look up and make eye contact with your collaborators or the conductor.

5. Prepare for different musical possibilities

Your goal here is to practice toward being flexible, so you can adapt to whatever situation you're in.

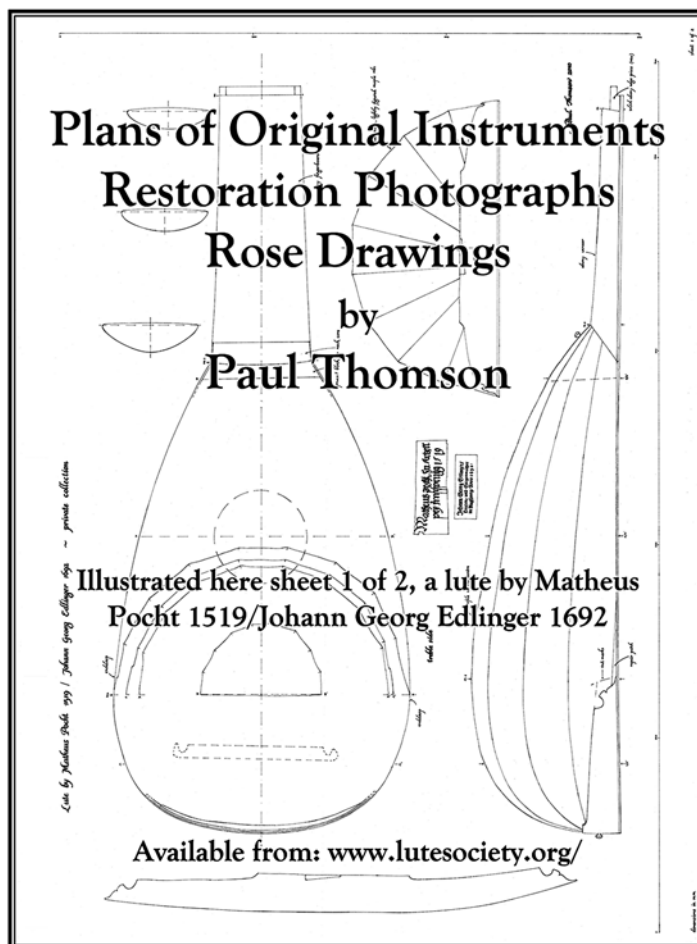
- Try playing the piece at different tempi and notice how it makes you play differently.
- Try rolling chords quickly, or slowly, or not at all.
- Play loud, or soft, or near the bridge, or away from it.
- Try different articulations.
- If it is continuo, try a low & high realization. Or a thicker (five-six voices) and a thinner (two-three voices) alternative. Or one where you play the bass in the written octave and one 8vb. Or one where you play all the notes of a quick bass line and one where you simplify it in order to focus more on the chords.
- Find places you might strum if you need extra volume or rhythmic presence in the ensemble.
- Consider where you might add extra bass notes, tasteful ornaments, nonchord tones, creative rolls.

6. Organize your gear for rehearsals and performances

Which of these things might you need?

- Music binder
- Tuning machine or app
- A few pencils and erasers, maybe a highlighter
- Shoulder strap
- Footstool
- Chamois
- Humidity pack or dampit in your case
- Music stand
- Stand light
- Emergency tape/scissors
- Emergency strings or frets (tastini?)

Now go forth and be a great ensemble collaborator!



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CDs

Josquin Desprez: Adieu mes amours

Dulces Exuviae; Romain Bockler, voice; Bor Zuljan, lute
Ricercar RJC 403

With Josquin's phenomenal popularity and respect, even during his lifetime—Heinrich Glareanus compared Josquin to Dante's Virgil—came the wealth of his output: printed, copied both mensural and intabulated. As the first years of lute tablatures were printed and, we assume, early performances played, lutenists could count on the intabulations of Josquin to command respect for their literature. In the struggle to be taken as serious musicians versus "mere strummers of strings," Josquin's intabulators, from Spinacino to Gintzler, from Valderrábano and Fuenllana to Bakfark, Teghi, and Francesco, tried to show how a lute can be as justified as a set of voices.

Here, the duo Dulces Exuviae have adapted Josquin for voice and lute, focusing on a style in the years during Josquin's later life to shortly after his death in 1521. Romain Bockler sings an easily believed early renaissance baritone with the gentle ease of a gifted gambist, while Bor Zuljan accompanies on six- and seven-course early sixteenth-century lutes. The first third of the sixteenth century is quite different from the second two thirds, and we need to be more accepting of how musicians from this period created their individual stamp—and this goes for both lutenist and singer. In an intimate setting and away from the sacred nave, this duo would have been far closer to their audience and felt the urgency to tailor their notes to the room and add "grace" to their performance. And so Mr. Bockler takes us along as he chooses his diminutions and cadences, swells and restraint, and engenders the faith we'd feel for Virgil's trusty lead, should such fortune be ours.

Fans of Jacob Heringman's Josquin CD will enjoy the occasional overlap: "Nimphes napées" shines particularly well on both CDs, and we hear how the two reductions—between the earlier age and Simon Gintzler's 1549 setting—set up so much potential in performance. I enjoy the lean toward Josquin's early chansons where the three-voice settings create so much momentum and opportunity for interpretation. "En l'ombre d'un buissonnet" and "Douleur me bat" are particularly rich in tone colors, diminutions, and imagination.

Bor Zuljan takes the opportunity to replace the remaining voices and creates an intabulation that must go beyond mere notes and create trust that Josquin's entire motet is faithful even while the notes decay and absent voices are reduced to mere strings. These, to my ear, are excellent accompaniments, from the chan-

sons to the motets, from the spare lute of Petrucci to the exquisite workings of "Nimphes napées" and "Fortuna desperata." There are quite a few lute solos here; some even exploit the unfamiliar bray of intentionally buzzing frets. The bray adds texture and sustain beyond the attack, which in polyphony allows an instrumental like "La Bernardina" to show all its consonants and suspensions. Be it colorful novelty, one weird sustain trick, or personal touch, I welcome its diversity. Additionally, Mr. Zuljan bows before his muse to add a handful of improvised preludes. While they often figure as brief introductions, they assure me that this concert will be like none other. Again, this sums up, for me, the singular feel to this recording, and I'm happy to recommend it in that regard as well as in its many other fine points.

Sean Smith

A Decoration of Silence

Nigel North
BGS Label

Aficionados of the lute are already familiar with the names of renaissance composer Francesco da Milano (1497-1543), dubbed "il Divino" by his contemporaries, and modern-day lutenist Nigel North. These two reunite for the aptly titled *A Decoration of Silence*, Mr. North's second volume in his series of recordings of Francesco's music. While Volume 1 contained several intabulations of vocal works, this disc focuses solely on the idiomatic forms of improvised-sounding ricercars, and the more structured, contrapuntal fantasias.

Because of the popularity of Francesco's works, professionals and amateurs all over the continent made copies in manuscripts for many years after his death, sometimes leading to questionable attribution or to mistakes being copied again and again. The liner notes for the CD mention that Mr. North sought out the earliest sources to play from for this recording.

Mr. North has grouped the works of the program into "sets" in order to string them together, as Francesco may well have done for his listeners. Renaissance poet Pontus de Tyard wrote how Francesco's playing "transported all those who were listening" into a "pleasurable melancholy" and then "returned the spirit and the senses to the place from which he had stolen them." Mr. North's organization of his sets takes us on a musical journey in similar fashion.

There has been no shortage of recordings over the last several decades of lutenists trying their hand at Francesco's oeuvre. However, there are some nice surprises that make this program stand out as unique and worthy of investigation. While a few of Francesco's popular works are included, the bulk of the program includes lesser-known pieces that are recorded here on both lute

and the somewhat more unusual, yet appropriate viola da mano: a flat-backed, viol-shaped instrument that is plucked with the fingers like a lute. This instrument has a noticeable brightness—perhaps owing to the flat back and higher pitch of the instrument—that contrasts nicely with the pieces that are played on lute.

As far as the recording itself, Mr. Nordberg performs flawlessly on two lovely sounding instruments by Malcolm Prior: a six-course tenor lute in g' and a viola da mano in a' based on a painting by Girolamo dal Libri (c. 1520). The instruments are presumably strung in gut and are captured with an intimacy to the sound and just the right balance of natural ambient reverberation.

A great recording happens when composer and performer are brought together in a cohesive way, and this recording is one of them. Highly recommended. It is available on the British BGS Label at www.bgsrecords.com.

Bill Good

Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger: *Intavolatura di chitarone*

Jonas Nordberg, theorbo
BIS 2417

After his music lay dormant for over three centuries, Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger (c. 1580–1651) has garnered an appreciative constituency among modern lutenists, evidenced by a profusion of recent CDs featuring his work. His style is certainly unique, though it can be argued, indeed has been argued that, brilliant performer though he was, he left something to be desired as a composer. With this recording we are presented with ample opportunity to judge for ourselves, as Swedish lutenist Jonas Nordberg has compiled a program of theorbo pieces from opposite ends of Kapsberger's career, works from *Libro primo d'intavolatura di chitarone*, published in Venice in 1604, and *Libro quarto d'intavolatura di chitarone*, published in Rome in 1640.

In the early seventeenth century, that period of transition between traditional renaissance polyphony and the new monody that characterized baroque practice, there was also a concerted effort to develop a purely instrumental style, something the lute family was well suited to. A healthy measure of iconoclasm and just plain chaos often attends these transitional periods—we can point to the *ars subtilior* composers of the late fourteenth century and to the wild musical experiments of the early and mid-twentieth century as examples. Kapsberger seemed intent on upending the musical conventions that must have marked his early training, and it is principally this aspect of his music that Mr. Nordberg so brilliantly illuminates on this CD.

Appropriately opening with “Toccata Prima” from *Libro quarto*, we are plunged head first into Kapsberger's world of free-flowing, improvisatory composition. This toccata is no small effort, stretching well over six minutes in length and shifting restlessly from chordal exposition to cascades of harp-like arpeggios to occasional forays into the contrapuntal. Mr. Nordberg ornaments the music liberally and takes a fluid view of the tempos, all of which contribute to the piece's extemporaneous effect. While Kapsberger conceived this piece to be accompanied by a continuo (there's a mensural bass line in the manuscript), it appears to be optional,

and in this convincing solo performance we certainly don't miss it.

The first eight tracks of the CD, all taken from *Libro quarto*, are arranged in two similar groups of four, each beginning with a toccata, followed by a passacaglia, a gagliarda, a canzone in the first instance and a canario in the second. Though Kapsberger obviously conceived these pieces to be more structured and measured than the toccatas that introduce them, they still serve as vehicles to showcase his considerable gift for variation. He seems to have wielded this gift right from the beginning, as we see in “Aria di Fiorenza” (based on the familiar tune, “Ballo di Granduca,” which you will definitely recognize when you hear it) and its nine variations from *Libro primo* (tracks 9–18). This twelve-minute excursion serves as a sort of fulcrum for Mr. Nordberg's program, balancing the two quasi-suites of the first eight tracks with the pieces that follow. One of these is Kapsberger's best-known work, the “Toccata Arpeggiata” from *Libro primo*. Really nothing more than a succession of relentless sixteenth-note arpeggios that meander leisurely through a thicket of sometimes odd harmonic changes, its charm actually rests on its unpredictability. The distinctly programmatic “Battaglia” (track 30) from *Libro quarto* belongs to a long-established genre of pieces that evoke battle scenes, a tradition stretching back at least to Clement Janequin (1485–1558). Kapsberger paints this picture on a large canvas, encompassing a number of distinct sections stretching over eight-plus minutes.

Kapsberger might not belong in the pantheon of his era's most accomplished composers, a distinction that arguably belongs to Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643) in Italy and John Dowland (1563–1626) in England. Listening to Kapsberger often reminds me of historian Arnold Toynbee, who once berated his colleagues for seeing history as “just one damned thing after another,” a description that seems to suit a lot of this music. Still, there must be something holding it all together because, especially in Mr. Nordberg's compelling renderings, the music is consistently absorbing, at times even spellbinding. The technical facility and affinity for Kapsberger's style that Mr. Nordberg demonstrates on this disc enlivens and illuminates the music. The very high technical standard of the recording (it's an SACD hybrid playable on any CD player) makes its own welcome contribution. The CD's booklet contains a wealth of information about the composer's life and music, clearly and readably presented.

Released by the highly reputable and widely distributed Swedish record label BIS, finding this recording should not be difficult. It's available from Amazon.com and similar outlets, and can be streamed from Allmusic.com or Tidal, to name just a few. I strongly urge you take the trouble to seek it out—it's one of the very best recordings of this literature.

Howard Kadis

Bella incognita: The Imagination of Marco dall'Aquila

Lukas Henning
GCD 923518

“And I believe that a different melody entirely is made by a skilled hand which picks lightly at the strings of the lute at the curve of the belly touching it not too heavily nor too skimmingly”

(Pietro Aretino, *Capricciosi ragionamenti*, 1536; translated by Raymond Rosenthal, 1971).

If you have followed Lukas Henning's web series Me:mo, you will have, no doubt, noticed his awe for and devout study of the social and artistic world that created Marco dall'Aquila. It flowed and filled with wealth, devotion, desperation, and, if you could not sell goods, you sold yourself and your art. If fortune smiled, the social circles opened and the game began. Thus Marco fell into the social circles of Titian, Giorgio Vasari, Giorgione da Castelfranco, and Aretino. The visual arts were finding new pastoral and vivid themes drawn from life (and lust) and music rose to the challenge. And who better to bear the illuminating torch of that music but Marco dall'Aquila? If only his three fantasies had survived from the *Diversi Autori* of 1536, we would simply know he was a gifted composer. Thankfully, besides the comments by his contemporaries, we have the Herwath collection in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek—and BSB Mus ms. 266, in particular—to colorfully flesh out his personal inventory. It's not large but it sparkles with *ricercars*, fantasies, *cara cossas*, *traditoras*, and *intabulations*.

The program opens in a gripping Phrygian mode, stirring the listener's passions with confidence, and leaps headlong into a *folia*-like *cara cossa*. There is nothing subtle, retiring, or coy about the presentation. Henning offers his own compositions in Marco's style and freely flashes his personal colorings, humor, and ornaments throughout. The *intabulations* sound inspired more by the moment than the established rules of *passaggi* engagement. To hear his "Tocha tocha la canella" or Jannequin's "La battaglia," you would more believe he were riffing off the laughter of his guests than sifting through the polite diminutions of Silvestro Ganassi. Ironically, Marco is described in a letter as "a lutenist held in some repute in Venice and recognizably equipped with some common-sense," yet "his confirmation [on a musical point] fails to please me, since it seems to be to me improper that a musicus in pursuit of understanding should seek out the counsel of a simple strummer of strings"—Giovanni Spataro. As we well know—and may hear here—Marco's fantasies and *intabulations* are of the highest order. The fantasies shimmer in playful inventiveness, and "La battaglia" absolutely rocks with breathtaking dynamics and excitement.

And Lukas Henning, in his first solo recording, does them the justice they deserve. As Henning is a former student of Hopkinson Smith, I would expect no less, but he brings a personal flair and love to the project rare in our modern circle. The liner notes are entertaining and speak well to his history. Yet more colorful essays on Marco and his times may be found at Henning's Me:Mo site (www.musicamemo.com). Henning thoughtfully breaks the program into four easily digestible sections. Excellently recorded, and on a lute (by Martin Shepherd) that lives for the spark of each subtle phrase, this CD is a success from beginning to end.

Sean Smith

Paladin

Alex McCartney

Veterum Musica VM022

Inevitably as we start our studies of renaissance lute we are given pieces by Francesco that are held to be of the finest quality—yet there are other names at least as deserving of such sun-

light. Happily, Mr. McCartney has recorded a program of the very deserving Jean-Paul Paladin from his *Tablature de Lutz* (1549) and the *Livre de tablature* (1560, but possibly from 1553). To help with occasional transitions, Mr. McCartney has added a few preludiae from Elias Mertel's *Hortus Musicalis Novus* (1615). As the *Quarterly* only recently reprinted Douglas Smith's section on Paladin from the *History of the Lute*, I'll decline to revisit Paladin's curious and incomplete history, but suffice it to say the most rewarding material will be found in his second collection.

Mr. McCartney makes a strong and reverent case for Paladin's genius through his choice of fantasies and madrigal settings. While the fantasy from the first book might seem a shade meandering and possibly meant to sound composed on the spot, it is impossible to believe the rest of the repertoire could not have been thoroughly composed and exquisitely polished over time. With the beauty of the madrigals of de Rore and Arcadelt folded into Paladin's *intabulatory* skill, we are treated to a tour de force. In a bit of icing on the cake we are further treated to clever and personal fantasies on both "Quand'io penso al martir" and "Alcun non puo sapere." This is where Paladin particularly shines. He wove new structures on existing vocal works already imbued with the poetry and character of the original composer, adding some of the character of his previous *intabulations*—and then from that we are offered a new harmonic tapestry that respects all its building blocks. Four such pieces survive (*intabulations* and fantasies of two madrigals and two motets), and Mr. McCartney treats us to two of the finest examples.

I feel that Mr. McCartney prefers the Italianate influence from Paladin's time in Lyons—the French chansons (Sermisy, Janequin, etc.) and motets (Sermisy, Jacotin) are conspicuously missing, as are the pavan and galliard pairs such as his famous "Antico" and "Paladino." I wonder if this is a missed opportunity or a conscious decision as this is where we find his most successful weddings of exceptional part-writing to more playful stylings.

I am of two minds about the preludiae. They help introduce their respective pieces—and Paladin may have been very accomplished in crafting such pieces. We can only guess what really happened 400 years ago, but the preludiae help to ease this solid mid-sixteenth-century repertoire into the ears of a later generation. They are decidedly not Paladin in character or construction.

The playing, program, and production of this CD are all certainly very good and quite pleasurable and, while somewhat confined, it is an excellent introduction to the work of Jean-Paul Paladin and the first renaissance recording by Alex McCartney.

Sean Smith

A Pleasing Melancholy

Chelys Consort of Viols

Emma Kirkby, soprano, James Akers, lute

BIS-2283

Melancholia. Boy, did those Elizabethans take the concept and run with it. Literature, poetry, and music of the age are saturated with it, though to be sure, it was an era when there was certainly much to be melancholy about. The late Sir Kenneth Clark, historian, TV presenter, and crashing bore (have you tried to watch *Civilisation* lately?) described the era as "brutal, unscrupu-

lous, and disorderly.” But he did make allowances for artistic luminaries of the day, citing Spenser, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Dowland, and Byrd. But nobody personified the melancholy temperament quite like John Dowland (1563–1626), and this CD devotes itself in large measure to his most poignant expression of it, *Lachrimae, or Seven Teares*, a collection of seven iterations for viol consort of his most famous song, “Flow My Tears.”

Published in 1604 while Dowland was in the service of King Christian IV of Denmark, the work is dedicated to the king’s sister, Anne, wife of King James I of England. Dowland had repeatedly sought a post in the English court, and it appears this dedication was a further attempt to ingratiate himself and achieve the appointment. It proved unsuccessful this time as well, however. It was not until 1612 that Dowland’s ambition was finally realized and curiously, once the post had been secured, he never published anything again. This could be because he simply no longer felt the need to, having achieved his goal, or because the demands of his post took up too much of his time.

There is true genius in the conception and composition of the seven pavans that are the centerpiece of this collection. Each represents a different sort of tear, for example, true tears (“*Lachrimae Verae*”), sighing tears (“*Lachrimae Gementes*”), lovers’ tears (“*Lachrimae Amantis*”), or feigned tears (“*Lachrimae Coactae*”). While each rests solidly on the foundation of the original “*Lachrimae Pavan*” (“*Lachrimae Antiquae*”), they are dazzling displays of Dowland’s mastery of counterpoint and invention. All are five-voice textures with a lute part included that mainly doubles the viols. It’s a very neat trick to compress such complexity into a playable lute part, but Dowland’s unique mastery of the instrument makes it possible. If you’ve ever tried to play these lute parts, you’ll appreciate what a handful (really two handfuls) they are. In the CD’s booklet, James Akers describes them as somewhere between a continuo part and a full-blown concerto (even though this form hadn’t quite been invented yet).

The performers have made the intelligent choice to intersperse the seven pavans with songs and instrumental works of the period, all of which conform to the central theme of melancholy. “Flow My Tears” from Dowland’s *Second Book of Songs* (1600) is of course the linchpin, but also included are equally melancholic works by Robert Jones (c. 1577–1617), Tobias Hume (c. 1579–1645), John Danyel (1564–c. 1625), and Anthony Holborne (c. 1545–1602). The remaining three instrumental works are dances, all in major keys, their inclusion being a welcome respite from the unrelenting downcast spirit of the rest of the program.

There are any number of worthy recordings of *Lachrimae or Seven Teares*, but this one stands out not only for the very high standard of the performances, but also for the technical quality of the recording itself. The Chelys Consort of Viols brings a clarity of interpretation to these pieces that illuminates the highly intricate inner workings of Dowland’s compositions. The way these players articulate the notes and lines gives the music a distinct heartbeat. Though the spotlight is rarely on him here, Mr. Akers’s sensitive renderings of the demanding lute parts is a vital contribution. And on top of it all, we have the legendary voice of Dame Emma Kirkby. I’ve been an ardent admirer of her singing practically since the beginning of her career, way back in the early 1970s. This is no longer the young, laser-focused voice Dame Emma wielded in the

last century though. In her late sixties when this disc was recorded (she’s seventy as of this writing), her voice has thickened somewhat and her expressive affectations have shifted in a more romantic direction. Nevertheless, she is still a formidable interpreter of this music, unrivaled in her ability to communicate the emotional import of these eloquent lyrics.

This disc should be easy to find, having been released by the well-known and widely distributed Swedish record label BIS. Like all their recordings of recent vintage, this one is an SACD hybrid, playable on any CD machine, but if you have the appropriate player, the sound quality of the SACD layer is a noticeable step above.

Howard Kadis

Jacques Arcadelt: Motetti, Madrigali, Chansons

Chamber Choir of Namur, Cappella Mediterranea,
Doulce Mémoire (with lutenists Pascale Boquet,
Quito Gato, and Matthias Spaeter)

Ricercar 392 (www.outhere-music.com)

If you have ever wondered what kind of vocal music was going on around Francesco da Milano during his career as a papal lutenist in Rome, this three-CD set provides both an excellent reference and a fine example of how Francesco might have joined in with the pope’s singers in vocal performances.

Francesco (1497–1543) entered service with the Vatican in 1519 under Leo X and served a succession of popes until the end of his career. There seems to have been a long hiatus after the sack of Rome in 1527, but he rejoined the Vatican for the last time in 1536 under the pleasure-loving Pope Paul III. During this time, Jacques Arcadelt (1507–1568), a Franco-Flemish composer from Namur (now in Belgium), was also making a successful career, primarily in Florence, inventing, along with Philippe Verdelot and Costanzo Festa, the through-composed madrigal. Repeated publications of Arcadelt’s brilliant new madrigals were circulated throughout Italy in from 1533 onward, so Arcadelt was already famous when he moved to Rome from 1539. In 1540 he was appointed to the College of Papal Chaplains and Singers. Hence, he must have been well known to the pope’s equally famous and successful lutenist, Francesco da Milano. Two of Francesco’s intabulations of Arcadelt madrigals have come down to us: “Quanta beltà” (along with a fantasy on the same madrigal) and “Quand’io penso al martire.”

These recordings give us a sampling of Arcadelt’s sacred music, motets which are firmly in the style of Josquin, much like Francesco’s polyphonic fantasies and ricercars. We are also given a sample of Arcadelt’s French chansons, similar in style to the many earlier chansons of Sermisy and others, so many of which were intabulated by Francesco himself. Such entertaining French chansons must have been quite popular at the time. Throughout this recording there are lively and delicate lute accompaniments by Doulce Mémoire stalwart Pascale Boquet, including a wonderful lute and harp instrumental version of the song “De mes ennuy.” There are also some hauntingly beautiful melodies and lute parts in the songs “Tout au rebours” and “Nous voyons que les hommes.”

Most significant, however, is the CD of Arcadelt's great madrigals, and how they are presented in this recording. Rather than performing one after another with all parts sung, Cappella Mediterranea have chosen to perform several of the madrigals with just a solo voice, allowing the two lutenists (Quito Gato and Matthias Spaeter) to divide the polyphonic lines between them. There is even a fine lute duet version of "Quando col dolce suono" and some fancy division-playing by the lute in "Deh fuggite, o mortali." The project's artistic director, Jérôme Lejeune, offers a most interesting theory. He says that Arcadelt's madrigals reveal a style of writing in which the uppermost line often takes on the musical language of a chanson, while the lower voices, untexted, serve as an accompaniment. He says: "We can therefore imagine that the great number of *lute intavolature* (i.e., intabulations) based on Arcadelt's madrigals were also used as an accompaniment for the madrigals when there was only one voice available, who would then be allotted the uppermost line." (This does work in practice.) As Lejeune points out, a great number of intabulations of Arcadelt madrigals have survived (by, among others, Francesco da Milano, Giovanni Maria da Crema, Perino Fiorentino, and Miguel de Fuenllana), which provides ample proof of Arcadelt's enduring influence on the repertoire for renaissance lute.

Michael Stover

Nocturnal

Jakob Lindberg, lute
BIS-2082

As a classical guitarist in the 1970s, I was particularly drawn to the LP *Julian Bream: 20th Century Guitar*. Included was Benjamin Britten's "Nocturnal," which Bream called the single greatest work for guitar. Its focus on sleep and dreams weaves through a series of variations from pleasant to terrifying, finally leading to the theme of restful sleep. Britten loved the lute and had originally planned to compose for it, but "Nocturnal" was as close as he got. Jakob Lindberg's reimagining of John Dowland's "Come Heavy Sleep" is the masterful result of Britten's take on the famous Dowland tune. The lute shines and perfectly reflects Britten's genius. Many of the selections presented on this CD revolve around nighttime and feature important composers of the day with many works familiar to the lute world.

Anthony Holborne's "The Honeysuckle (perfuming the night air)," "The Night Watch," and "The Fairy Round" suggest activities that take place in the evening, while "Countess of Pembroke's Paradise" is a nod to Mary Sidney, a noted patroness of the arts, whose house became known as a paradise for important poets of the day. As a testament to Holborne's importance, the 1976 consort recording of "The Fairy Round" was included on the golden record sent into space aboard Voyager 1 and 2 as an example of culture and achievement.

Edward Collard was appointed court lutenist to Queen Elizabeth after the death of John Johnson. His inventive set of variations on the well-known tune "Go from My Window" and "Hugh Aston's Ground" with a repeated bass line, counter melodies, and clever musical ideas represent his fine work. Daniel Bacher's works require a high degree of technical skill to perform, as evidenced in his divisions. John Daniel's "Mrs. Anne

Greene Her Leaves Be Green" is another example of theme and variations, this time using the tune "The Leaves Be Green." The next three anonymous pieces consist of simple settings of Scottish melodies found in the mandora manuscript of John Skene. "Remember Me at Evening" is an imitative reference to the nighttime, while "The English Nightingale" was a familiar tune that can be found in many settings. "Lullaby" by William Byrd and arranged by Francis Cutting continues the sixteenth-century practice of intabulating vocal works for lute. The beautiful arrangement loosely follows the five-part Byrd setting in which the text lulls the baby Jesus to sleep.

Britten also used this technique when he set Dowland's "Come Heavy Sleep" for guitar at the end of his "Nocturnal." Lindberg follows Britten's first draft titled "A Night Fancy," but transposed it lower to cover the wide range of the work. With sections named musingly, very agitated, restless, uneasy, march-like, dreaming, gently rocking, and passacaglia that lead to "Come Heavy Sleep," he captures the process of sleep with which we all can relate. Lindberg uses traditional lute technique to great effect and results in convincing idiomatic sections. Britten loved the lute but took Bream's advice to arrange it for guitar so it had a better chance of being heard regularly even though he had the sound of the lute in his head while composing it. Many thanks to Lindberg for his thoughtful interpretation, which breathes new life into "Nocturnal."

Lindberg now turns his attention to the source: John Dowland. "A Dream," "A Fancy," "Orlando Sleepeth," "Galliard to Lachrimæ," "Mr. Dowland's Midnight," and "Farewell" again point to the theme of nighttime. The text to "Flow My Tears," based on the "Lachrimæ," has references to night and darkness. These are performed with the greatest depth, understanding, and musicality. The CD ends with John Johnson's "Passingmeasures Pavan" and "Carmen's Whistle," showing off the genius of his music and skill as a court lutenist, while "Good Night and Good Rest" bring this contemplative journey into the night to a close.

The recording is warm and, pleasingly, not over reverberant. The playing and interpretation by Lindberg is superb and follows his tradition of fine recordings. He has performed and taught throughout the world, and presently teaches at the Royal College of Music. Having heard Jakob live at LSA seminars and on his numerous CDs covering a wide range of music, it is again a pleasure to listen to the present recording—a jewel. Sweet dreams.

Frank DeGroot

Pietro Torri: La vanità del mondo

Barbara Schlick, soprano; Ingrid Schmithüsen, soprano;
Derek Lee Ragin, countertenor; Michael Schopper, bass,
Musica Antiqua Köln, directed by Reinhard Goebel
Musique en Wallonie MEW 1890

Pietro Torri (c. 1660–1737) was an Italian composer who, working as a court musician and composer, spent much of his life in German-, French-, and Dutch-speaking countries. He is best known as a composer of opera and oratorios. The oratorio, *La vanità del mondo*, was first performed in Brussels in 1706.

La vanità is an allegory in which the human soul is tempted by worldly pleasures but, in the end, Grace wins out. The ora-

torio is comprised of recitatives and arias as well as choruses, an overture to each of the two parts, and several purely instrumental ritornellos.

We have named characters throughout: Pleasure (soprano Barbara Schlick), Grace (soprano Ingrid Schmithüsen), the Soul (countertenor Derek Lee Ragin), and the World (bass Michael Schopper). In the three choruses, the soloists, along with tenor Rogers Covey-Crump, perform. The small instrumental ensemble (oboe, violins, violas, cello, harpsichord, and organ) is drawn from Musica Antiqua Köln under the direction of Reinhard Goebel.

Each of the two parts begins with a short overture in the French style, with a slow introduction in dotted rhythms followed by a livelier section. After the overture, each of the characters takes a turn with a recitative, some quite extensive, followed by a da capo aria. The writing is very attractive, and if none of the arias rises to the level of better known composers, it is expert just the same.

With the exception of the choruses, there are no duets or other vocal ensembles. Beyond some imitation in the overtures and final chorus, there is little counterpoint.

With few exceptions, the recording, taken from a live performance at the 1988 International Festival of Sacred Music in Fribourg, Switzerland, is quite good. The overall sound is warm and clear.

I enjoyed the work of American countertenor Derek Lee Ragin as the Soul very much. The low-lying tessitura in several of his arias was handled with aplomb, and he ornamented gracefully throughout. Ms. Schmithüsen and Mr. Schopper made the most of their spotlighted moments.

Ms. Schlick falters badly in her first aria, “Esiltatevi pena funeste.” The sixteenth-note runs and intervals are behind the beat, and breaths are taken in odd places. It’s difficult to speculate why such a well-known singer in early music repertoire would sing so poorly, but this is one of the pitfalls of recording and offering live performances. She recovers well in the rest of her arias.

The instrumental accompaniment is impeccable. Oboist Alison Gangler and violinist Reinhard Goebel deserve special praise for their obligatos throughout.

The costs of producing such a recording must be enormous: a score and performing parts for the instrumentalists and a vocal score for the singers must be made; instrumentalists and singers must be hired; the cost of the recording itself; the publication of the booklet with its essays and translations into four languages; photographs; distribution, etc., etc. Perhaps that is the explanation for a thirty-year-old recording of a flawed performance being released at this time.

David Ross

Lachrimae: John Dowland

Nigel North, lute, and Les Voix humaines
Atma Classique ACD2 2761

“Tears in Heaven.” “96 Tears.” “Tracks of My Tears.” “As Tears Go By.” And the list goes on. The subject of tears has been the source for a variety of songs throughout history, but John Dowland had already distilled the subject down to seven types in *Lachrimae (or Seven Tears on Seven Passionate Pavans*

with divers other Pavans, Galliards, and Almands set forth for the Lute, Viols, or Violons, in five parts). He, with all his hardships and melancholic demeanor, might be the most qualified to explore this topic. Remember he referred to himself as “Semper Dowland, semper dolens.” His list includes “Lachrimae Antiquae (Old tears),” “Lachrimae Antiquae Novae (Old tears renewed),” “Lachrimae Gementes (Sighing tears),” “Lachrimae Tristes (Sad tears),” “Lachrimae Coactae (Forced tears),” “Lachrimae Amantis (A lover’s tears),” and “Lachrimae Verae (True tears).” Through the use of a four-note descending motif, Dowland portrays the forming of a tear and its path down the cheek. The four-note tetra-chord would become a standard emblem of grief.

This is an excellent recording—I would expect no less given the musicians involved. The ensemble and interplay between this group produced a flawless rendering of Dowland’s objective while achieving the ideal balance between instruments. The lute never gets overpowered by the consort and, in fact, shines through quite nicely. North’s large discography shows that he is an accomplished performer in any setting, and Les Voix humaines is the perfect foil for this project. They have performed extensively and recorded some of the greatest repertoire for viols as well as newly discovered works. North and Les Voix humaines performing together is a beautiful thing. One could not ask for a more rewarding pairing.

The program mixes the seven lachrimae with dances and solo lute pieces, streamlining the CD by omitting some of the dances in the original. The lachrimae cycle is played in order, but the inserted dances act as a palate cleanser to highlight each one on its own. “Captaine Piper His Galliard” opens with solo lute, joined by a solo viol playing the melody and finishing with imitative treatment by the entire ensemble. Such spritely music for a captain turned pirate! The “Lachrimae Antiquae” begins with the “tear” motif and features lute with the entire consort. This, of course, is based on the setting for the famous lachrimae for solo lute. Some notable characteristics of the lachrimae are the intricate polyphonic textures and the motivic relation to the “Flow My Tears” tune. Each pavan has distinctive qualities, but the set is unified by a common theme, making each one a different version of the same thought.

In “A Pilgrimes Solace” the lute plays an instrumental arrangement of the song “Were Every Thought an Eye.” Its light and airy demeanor is a perfect contrast and lead into “The Earle of Essex Galliard” (aka as the lute song “Can She Excuse My Wrongs”). This presents a nicely fleshed out version of this familiar tune with interplay between the lute and consort. “M. Henry Noel His Galliard” and “M. John Langtons Pavan” are relaxed and introspective, while “M. George Whitehead His Almand” (which reminds me of the Campion tune “What Then is Love but Mourning?”) is more in keeping with a traditional dance feel. Dowland’s “Adew for Master Oliver Cromwell” features a setting for lute and bass viol providing an underpinning dialogue. This setting is both solemn and respectful. Next is a pairing of the solo lute setting of “Lachrimae Pavan” and the “Galliard” to the preceding “Pavan.” North’s interpretations are heartfelt, musical, and well reasoned. “Sir John Souch His Galliard” features lute and consort again. A very lyrical and spirited reading indeed.

The recording took place in Mirabel, Quebec, at Églis

Saint-Augustine under the direction of Johanne Goyette. This pristine, warm recording presents the players as if you were there listening live. We are fortunate to be in a time when so many CDs are available and are of exceptional quality both musically and technically. Add this one to the list. The insert edited by Michel Ferland and graphic design by Adeline Payette Beauhesne provides an informative and historical, as well as an artistic, backdrop. The cover and performances create an overall feeling of sadness and the impression of that ontic entity the tear.

Frank DeGroodt

Les Accords Nouveaux, Volumes I-IV

Sigrun Richter

www.ambitus.de amb97828, amb97921, amb96956, amb97970

In the opening decades of the seventeenth century, lutenists started to experiment with alternate tunings on the lute in the pursuit of new sonorities on their instrument, in keeping with the rapidly changing musical styles of the time. Eventually by mid-century, the d minor tuning had been standardized, but in the intervening years lute players experimented with numerous tuning schemes. These “accords nouveaux” yielded a significant amount of repertoire that is seldom heard today.

In the latter half of the 1980s, German lutenist Sigrun Richter set out to explore and promote accords nouveaux. These unusual tunings are something we might view as perhaps a mysterious dark corner of the lute repertoire, but they deserve more coverage in modern times. This led Ms. Richter to record four CDs over a span of almost thirty years, all centered on this beautiful and fascinating music.

Volume I, recorded in 1989, centers on the music of Pierre Gaultier (1599–1681), who used six different tunings in his 1638 publication. Volume II is a survey of five composers in four different tunings found in Pierre Ballard’s *Tabulature des differents auteurs sur les accords nouveaux* publications from 1631 and 1638: René Mésangeau, Nicolas Bouvier, Dubuisson, Nicolas Chevalier, and François Dufaut. Volume III focuses on Dufaut (1604–1670), whose earlier works presented on this disc use the transitional tuning, while the later works are in d minor tuning.

Volume IV features the works of Silesian composer and lutenist Esaias Reusner (1636–1679). Chronologically the latest of the composers featured in this series, Reusner grew up in an age when d minor tuning had become the standardized norm on the baroque lute. However, Reusner continued to slightly alter d minor tuning to exploit the unique resonance and character that the different tunings offered. Ms. Richter uses d minor as well as Bb scordatura (Bb d f a d' f').

The recordings show the evolution of an instrumental style born out of a break from the past. Listening to the recording set as a whole, one is taken on a journey from the closing of the renaissance to the baroque—what we think of now as clearly defined periods are a gradual progression. The evolution starts from an amorphous way of breaking chords and harmony (*style brisé*) that over the decades of the seventeenth century finds its way into a focused style that is what we know as the baroque lute.

All of the CDs are superbly recorded, and even though the recording sessions were spread over several decades, the sound

is very consistent. Ms. Richter’s playing is lively and rhythmic, with a technical prowess and command of the instrument that is impressive, but only serve the phrasing and nuance of this intimate music. We are not always told which tunings are employed in the suites played on the recordings. However, this encourages us to focus our ears on the music and Ms. Richter’s wonderful playing rather than focus on such lute-centric esoteric matters!

These recordings are available at www.ambitus.de. They are somewhat hard to find on typical outlets such as Amazon, and are not currently available on iTunes in the U. S., but are certainly worth the effort to seek them out.

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